



PATENT
Customer No. 22,852
Attorney Docket No. 7203-25

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)
Nicholas Gerard Byrne et al.) Group Art Unit: Not Yet Assigned
Serial No.: 09/857,456) Examiner: Not Yet Assigned
Filed: June 5, 2001)
For: Interface Patch Clamping)

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Prior to the examination of the above application, please amend this application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Amend claims 10-12 and 15-18 as follows:

10. (Amended) A method according to claim 2, in which contact between the pipette tip and the air/liquid interface and/or subsequent movement of the pipette tip into the liquid is detected by monitoring pipette capacitance.

11. (Amended) A method according to claim 2, in which if no cell is contacted at or near the interface as or within a predetermined time after contact between the pipette and the interface, the pipette is withdrawn from the interface and then moved back to the interface to repeat the attempt to contact a cell.